

Quarantine-free entry to Thailand resuming from Feb 1

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Dhaka: Thailand will be resuming its quarantine-free travel scheme from February 1, announced the country's officials on January 20.

Earlier, the programme was cancelled over concerns of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

However, from February 1, again, fully vaccinated travellers will be able to enter the Kingdom under the "test and go" scheme as long as they take Covid tests on the first and fifth days after arriving, said Taweessin Visanuyothin, spokesman for the country's Covid-19 taskforce.

Visitors will have to isolate at a hotel while waiting for their test results and will be required to download a tracking app to ensure they comply with the rules.

In an effort to rebound from its travel plunge, Thailand launched the "test and go" scheme in November as an alternative to two weeks' hotel quarantine.

"In case there are more infections or the situation changes, there will be a re-assessment for inbound travellers and adjust toward the sandbox scheme," added Taweessin.

Under the sandbox programme launched in 2021 as a first step towards resuming tourism, fully vaccinated visitors spend seven nights in certain designated locations, such as the resort island of Phuket, before being allowed to travel on to the rest of Thailand.

The country is further relaxing Covid restrictions as restaurants will be allowed to serve alcohol until 11:00 pm – easing the current 9:00 pm cut-off.

Thailand's tourism ministry expects around five million foreign visitors arriving in the country popular among tourists in 2022, down from nearly 40 million in the year before the pandemic.

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